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EXAMINER

ENGLAND, DAVID E

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2156

DATE MAILED: 08/06/2002

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/247,502

Applicant(s)

BATES ET AL.

Examiner

David E. England

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 July 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☒ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s) _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1 – 39 are presented for examination.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent, or on an international application by another who has fulfilled the requirements of paragraphs (1), (2), and (4) of section 371(c) of this title before the invention thereof by the applicant for patent.

The changes made to 35 U.S.C. 102(e) by the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999 (AIPA) do not apply to the examination of this application as the application being examined was not (1) filed on or after November 29, 2000, or (2) voluntarily published under 35 U.S.C. 122(b). Therefore, this application is examined under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) prior to the amendment by the AIPA (pre-AIPA 35 U.S.C. 102(e)).

2. Claims 1, 2, 5 – 11, 13 – 39 rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by MacNaughton et al. U. S. Patent No. 6020884 (hereinafter MacNaughton).

3. As per claim 1, MacNaughton teaches a method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment, the method comprising:

4. (a) tracking accesses to a plurality of preexisting hypertext documents by a plurality of users, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line 57); and

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5. (b) notifying a first user that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user that is accessing the same hypertext document, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

6. As per claim 2, MacNaughton teaches tracking accesses to the plurality of preexisting hypertext document includes maintaining a list of users that access each hypertext document, and wherein notifying the first user includes notifying the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

7. As per claim 5, MacNaughton teaches tracking accesses to the hypertext document further includes removing from the list of users a user that is no longer accessing the hypertext document, (e.g. col. 9, lines 5 – 24).

8. As per claim 6, MacNaughton teaches the second user has a home hypertext document associated therewith, the method further comprising communicating to the first user a copy of the home hypertext document associated with the second user in response to user input from the first user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

9. As per claim 7, MacNaughton teaches notifying the first user of the location of the hypertext document currently being viewed by a third user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

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10. As per claim 8, MacNaughton teaches communicating to the first user a copy of the hypertext document currently being viewed by the third user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

11. As per claim 9, MacNaughton teaches tracking accesses to the hypertext document further includes maintaining a navigation history for the second user, the navigation history including a set of hypertext documents previously accessed by the second user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

12. As per claim 10, MacNaughton teaches notifying the first user of the set of hypertext documents in the navigation history for the second user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

13. As per claim 11, MacNaughton teaches displaying a first hypertext document to the first user, the first hypertext document including a hypertext link to a second hypertext document that is in the navigation history for the second user, wherein displaying the first hypertext document includes displaying within the first hypertext document an indication that the second hypertext document is in the navigation history for the second user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

14. As per claim 13, MacNaughton teaches the first user has associated therewith a saved user list identifying at least the second user, and wherein notifying the first user of the identity of the second user includes notifying the first user of whether the second user is currently active in the multi-user computer environment, (e.g. col. 21, lines 4 – 24).

15. As per claim 14, MacNaughton teaches performing a predetermined list management operation on the user list in response to user input from the first user, the predetermined list management operation selected from the group consisting of adding another user to the user list, removing a user from the user list, sending a message to a user in the user list, navigating to a hypertext document currently being viewed by a user from the user list, and navigating to a home hypertext document for a user from the user list, (e.g. col. 9, lines 6 – 52).

16. As per claim 15, MacNaughton teaches

17. (a) associating a second hypertext document with the second user in response to user input from the second user, (e.g. col. 9, lines 6 – 52); and

18. (b) notifying the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the second user, (e.g. col. 9, lines 6 – 52).

19. As per claim 16, MacNaughton teaches communicating the second hypertext document to the first user in response to user input from the first user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

20. As per claim 17, MacNaughton teaches associating the second hypertext document with the second user includes storing an identifier for the second hypertext document in a list of favorite links associated with the second user, and wherein notifying the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the second user includes displaying the list of favorite links to the first user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

21. As per claim 18, MacNaughton teaches displaying the list of favorite links is performed responsive to user input received from the first user while the first and second users are currently viewing the same hypertext document, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

22. As per claim 19, MacNaughton teaches building a list of favorite links associated with the hypertext document being viewed by the first user by combining lists of favorite links associated with each user currently viewing the same hypertext document as the first user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

23. As per claim 20, MacNaughton teaches

24. (a) associating a second hypertext document with a first hypertext document in response to user input from the second user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57); and

25. (b) notifying the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

26. As per claim 21, MacNaughton teaches associating the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document includes temporarily associating the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document such that the association therebetween is discarded whenever the second user is not active in the multi-user computer environment, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

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27. As per claim 22, MacNaughton teaches tracking accesses to the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents is performed in a first computer, and wherein at least a portion of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents are stored externally from the multi-user computer environment, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

28. As per claim 23, MacNaughton teaches a method of providing access to hypertext documents in a multi-user computer environment of the type including a plurality of client computers coupled to at least one server computer over a network, each client computer associated with a user, the method comprising:

29. (a) selectively accessing with the server computer a first hypertext document among a plurality of hypertext documents in response to an access request received from a client computer associated with a first user among a plurality of users, wherein the first hypertext document is stored remotely from the server computer, (e.g. col. 7, line 8 – col. 8, line 25);

30. (b) tracking with the server computer accesses to the plurality of hypertext documents by the plurality of users, (e.g. col. 7, line 8 – 56); and

31. (c) notifying the first user of the identity of each additional user among the plurality of users that is also accessing the first hypertext document, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

32. As per claim 24, MacNaughton teaches the first hypertext document is stored on a second server computer, wherein the first and second server computers are coupled to one another over the Internet, (e.g. col. 21, line 52 – col. 22, line 14).

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33. As per claim 25, MacNaughton teaches an apparatus, comprising:

34. (a) a memory, (e.g. col. 21, lines 10 – 25); and

35. (b) a program, resident in the memory, the program configured to track accesses to a plurality of preexisting documents by a plurality of users, and to notify a first user among the plurality of users that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user among the plurality of users that is accessing the same hypertext document, (e.g. col. 6, lines 1 – 12).

36. As per claim 26, MacNaughton teaches the program is further configured to maintain a list of users that access each hypertext document, and to notify the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line 57).

37. As per claim 27, MacNaughton teaches the second user has a home hypertext document associated therewith, the program further configured to communicate to the first user a copy of the home hypertext document associated with the second user in response to user input from the first user, (e.g. col. 8, line 58 – col. 9, line 52).

38. As per claim 28, MacNaughton teaches the program is further configured to retrieve a navigation history for the second user, the navigation history including a set of hypertext documents previously accessed by the second user, (e.g. col. 8, lines 10 – 57).

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39. As per claim 29, MacNaughton teaches the memory is disposed in a server computer, the apparatus further comprising a client computer coupled to the server computer, (e.g. col. 21, line 52 – col. 22, line 14), the client computer including a second memory and a second program resident in the second memory, the second program configured to display a first hypertext document to the first user, the first hypertext document including a hypertext link to a second hypertext document that is in the navigation history for the second user, the second program further configured to display within the first hypertext document an indication that the second hypertext document is in the navigation history for the second user, (e.g. col. 3, line 41 – col. 4, line 27).

40. As per claim 30, MacNaughton teaches the program is further configured to associate a second hypertext document with the second user in response to user input from the second user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line 57); and to notify the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the second user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line 57).

41. As per claim 31, MacNaughton teaches the program is further configured to store an identifier for the second hypertext document in a list of favorite links associated with the second user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line 57).

42. As per claim 32, MacNaughton teaches the program is further configured to build a list of favorite links associated with the hypertext document being viewed by the first user by

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combining lists of favorite links associated with each user currently viewing the same hypertext document as the first user, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

43. As per claim 33, MacNaughton teaches the program is further configured to associate a second hypertext document with a first hypertext document in response to user input from the second user, and to notify the first user of the association of the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

44. As per claim 34, MacNaughton teaches the program is further configured to temporarily associate the second hypertext document with the first hypertext document such that the association therebetween is discarded whenever the second user is not active, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

45. As per claim 35, MacNaughton teaches further comprising a first computer within which the memory is disposed, wherein the program is configured to retrieve at least a portion of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents from a second computer remote from the first computer and external from the apparatus, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

46. As per claim 36, MacNaughton teaches the second computer is coupled to the first computer over the Internet, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line57).

47. As per claim 37, MacNaughton teaches a multi-user data processing system, comprising:

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48. (a) a plurality of client computers, each client computer associated with at least one of a plurality of users, (e.g. col. 3, line 41 – col. 4, line 27);

49. (b) at least one server computer coupled to the plurality of client computers over an internal network, the server computer further interfaced with an external network, (e.g. col. 3, line 41 – col. 4, line 27); and

50. (c) a program, resident in the server computer, the program configured to selectively access a first hypertext document among a plurality of hypertext documents from the external network in response to an access request received from a client computer associated with a first user among the plurality of users, the program further configured to track accesses to the plurality of hypertext documents by the plurality of users, and to notify the first user of the identity of each additional user among the plurality of users that is also accessing the first hypertext document, (e.g. col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line 57).

51. As per claim 38, MacNaughton teaches a program product, comprising:

52. (a) a program configured to track accesses to a plurality of preexisting documents by a plurality of users, and to notify a first user among the plurality of users that is currently accessing one of the plurality of preexisting hypertext documents of the identity of a second user among the plurality of users that is accessing the same hypertext document, (e.g. col. 6, lines 1 – 12, & col. 7, line 57 – col. 8, line 57); and

53. (b) a signal bearing media bearing the program, (e.g. col. 7, lines 8 – 36).

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54. As per claim 39, MacNaughton teaches the signal bearing media is selected from the group consisting of a transmission type media and recordable media, (e.g. col. 6, lines 13 – 60).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

55. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

56. Claims 3 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacNaughton (6020884) in view of, “Chat Comp: Lobby”, Yahoo!, <http://chat.yahoo.com>, downloaded 11/18/98, (hereinafter Yahoo).

57. As per claim 3, MacNaughton does not specifically teach notifying the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users includes displaying the list of users to the first user. Yahoo teaches notifying the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users includes displaying the list of users to the first user, (Yahoo page 2). It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Yahoo with MacNaughton because it is easier and more pleasing to the eye to see a user on a list on a Web page than in a database.

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58. As per claim 4, MacNaughton does not teach notifying the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users includes separately notifying the first user of each user from the list of users that is no longer accessing the hypertext document. Yahoo page 1 and Yahoo page 2 teaches notifying the first user of the identity of each user in the list of users includes separately notifying the first user of each user from the list of users that is no longer accessing the hypertext document. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Yahoo with MacNaughton because the first user would not have to search for a user to find out if the second user is accessing the hypertext document. The first user would only need to look at the updated list.

59. Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over MacNaughton (6020884) in view of Moncreiff (6061716).

60. As per claim 12, MacNaught does not teach displaying the indication includes displaying the hypertext link to the second hypertext document in a color associated with the second user. Moncreiff teaches displaying the indication includes displaying the hypertext link to the second hypertext document in a color associated with the second user. It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art at the time the invention was made to combine Moncreiff with MacNaughton because having color to the hypertext of a user is pleasing to the eye.

Conclusion

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61. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

62. a. "Profiles", Yahoo!, <http://profiles.yahoo.com/wheresoz>, (November 9, 1998), (page 1).

63. b. "Help – Chat: HTML Chat Guide", Yahoo!, <http://chat.yahoo.com/>, (page3).

64. c. "Help – Chat: HTML Chat Guide", Yahoo!,
<http://chat.yahoo.com/help/cht/chtml/chtml-04.html>, (page4).

65. d. Kenner et al. U.S. Patent No. 6421726 discloses System and methods for selection and retrieval of diverse types of video data on a computer network.

66. e. Serbinis et al. U.S. Patent No. 6314425 discloses Apparatus and methods for use of access tokens in an Internet document management system.

67. f. Marks U.S. Patent No. 5956491 discloses Group communications multiplexing system.

68. g. Steele et al. U.S. Patent No. 6211877 discloses Method for communicating between programming language controlled frames and CGI/HTML controlled frames within the same browser window.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to David E. England whose telephone number is 703-305-5333.

The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri, 7:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Alvin Oberley can be reached on 703-305-9761. The fax phone numbers for the

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organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are none for regular communications and none for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is none.

David E. England
Examiner
Art Unit 2156

de
July 29, 2002



JOHN A. FOLLANSBEE
PRIMARY EXAMINER